

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 5, 2002

The Honorable Ernest Istook
Chairman
Subcommittee on Treasury, Postal Service and General Government
Appropriations Committee
B307 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515-6028

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We are writing to you as Members of the Congressional Caucus to Fight and Control Methamphetamine to direct your attention to a matter of importance to us and to the nation. As you begin your efforts to draft the FY03 Treasury-Postal Appropriations bill, we hope you will consider our funding request for a critical program to fight the production and trafficking of methamphetamine. We respectfully request your assistance to ensure that the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) program in the Office of National Drug Control Policy is made a high priority in the bill produced by your subcommittee.

Methamphetamine, or "meth," manufacturing and use is among the fastest growing drug problems throughout the nation. The recipe to manufacture the drug can be obtained over the Internet, and many of the ingredients are common household products such as over-the-counter cold and allergy medicines, iodine, ammonia, starter fluid, drain cleaner or rubbing alcohol. Last year, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and state and local law enforcement officials seized 9,753 meth labs. In at least 46 states, these numbers are growing at an alarming rate. Even more disturbing is the fact that more than two-thirds of these labs are found in "average" residences in rural areas and a startling 12% of America's youth have used methamphetamine.

Methamphetamine production leaves behind five to six pounds of toxic waste per pound of meth produced. The toxic byproducts contaminate sites where meth is produced, posing serious health and environmental hazards to those nearby, and poisoning unsuspecting people who innocently come into contact with the waste byproducts of these labs. Clean-up of abandoned meth labs costs local governments and private citizens tens of thousands of dollars to dispose of the toxic materials left behind.

One critical program in the fight against methamphetamine abuse is the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTA) program within the Office of National Drug Control Policy. HIDTA, which was funded at \$226.35 million in FY02, provides critical resources that will significantly help our cities and towns fight meth abuse. This year, the President's budget reduces HIDTA funding by \$20 million to \$206.35 million. With the decreased funding, the meth problem will far exceed our ability to deal with it effectively.

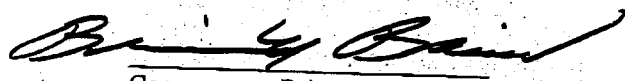
To effectively combat this scourge, some of our existing HIDTAs must be expanded not reduced. We feel that the appropriate level of funding will be at minimum the same level as appropriated for FY02, not the proposed reduced level.

Letter to the Honorable Ernest Istook
April 5, 2002
-Page Two-

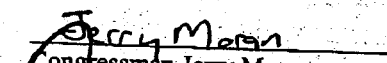
Programs such as High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas not only help law enforcement identify and dismantle labs, but they also help break the cycle of other crimes associated with meth use -- crimes such as domestic violence, child abuse and theft. As members of the Congressional Caucus to Fight and Control Methamphetamine, we strongly urge you to include increased funding for this program to continue our efforts to combat the growing problem of production and trafficking of methamphetamine.

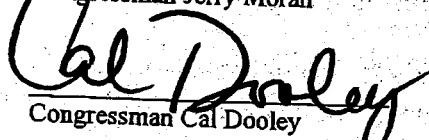
We appreciate your attention to this important matter and look forward to working with you to stop this growing national problem.

Sincerely,


Congressman Brian Baird



Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher

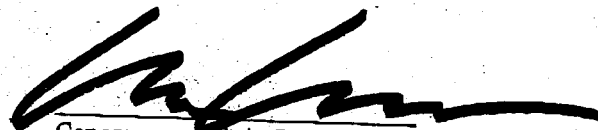

Congressman Jerry Moran



Congressman Cal Dooley


Congressman Rick Larsen

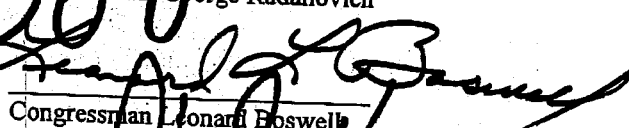

Congressman Howard Berman

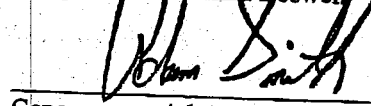

Congressman Greg Walden


Congressman Chris Cannon

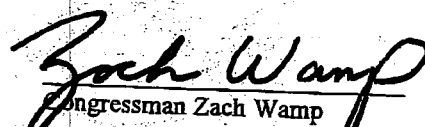

Congressman Doug Ose

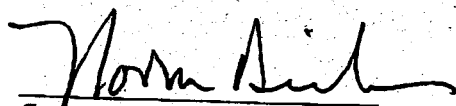

Congressman George Radanovich

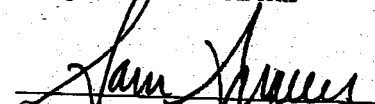

Congressman Leonard Boswell


Congressman Adam Smith



Congressman Steve Horn

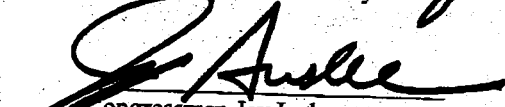

Congressman Zach Wamp

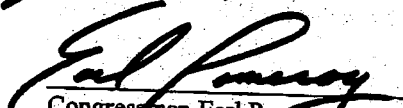

Congressman Norm Dicks



Congressman Sam Graves


Congressman Tom Osborne



Congressman Van Hilleary


Congressman Jay Inslee

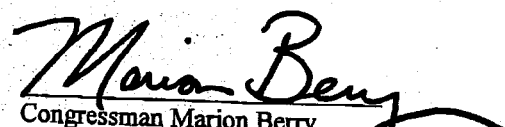

Congressman Earl Pomeroy

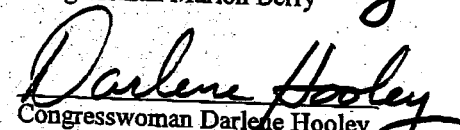

Congressman Jim Gibbons

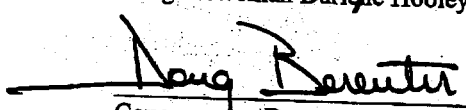

Congressman Robert Matsui

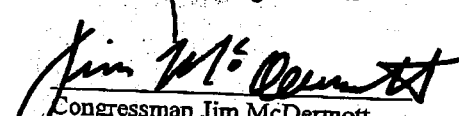

Congresswoman Shelley Berkley


Congressman Ken Calvert


Congressman Marion Berry


Congresswoman Darlene Hooley


Congressman Doug Bereuter

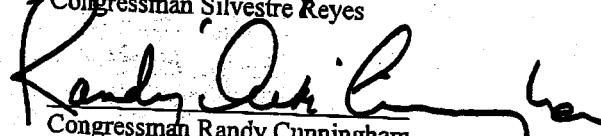

Congressman Jim McDermott

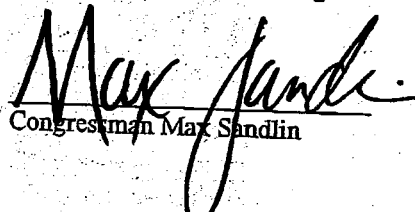

Congressman Gary Condit



Congressman Wally Herger

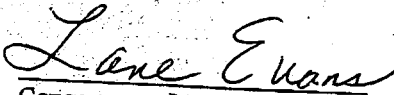

Congressman Frank Lucas

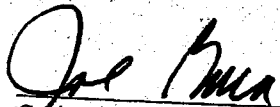

Congressman Silvestre Reyes


Congressman Randy Cunningham


Congressman Max Sandlin


Congressman Bob Goodlatte


Congressman Lane Evans


Congressman Joe Baca